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U.S.-MIDEAST

U.S. statement on Mideast war.

BY BARRY SCHWEID

WASHINGTON (AP)-SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS TODAY SAID THE MIDDLE EAST WAR BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARAB STATES HAS NOT YET TAKEN A DECISIVE TURN AND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS ATTEMPTING TO RESTRAIN THE FIGHTING.

DESCRIBING THE WAR AS ONE OF "EBB AND FLOW," THESE OFFICIALS SAID THEY COULD NOT MAKE ANY JUDGMENT AS TO ANY DECISIVE TURN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER AFTER FOUR DAYS OF FIGHTING.

IN ASSESSING THE SOVIET ATTITUDE, THESE OFFICIALS CREDITED MOSCOW WITH GOING ALONG WITH A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING AFTER FIRST OPPOSING ONE.

BUT WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE RUSSIANS WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT ENLARGED, STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ROBERT J. MCCLOSKEY REPLIED, "I WOULD BE HARD PUT TO SAY."

THE SOVIET ATTITUDE IS CONSIDERED A KEY ELEMENT IN THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME OF THE CONFLICT. ASKED WHETHER MOSCOW IS USING ITS INFLUENCE TO RESTRAIN THE FIGHTING, THE OFFICIALS SAID THEY HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF THAT SO FAR. AND, WHILE NOTING THE SOVIET UNION DROPPED ITS OPPOSITION TO SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION, THE OFFICIALS SAID POINTEDLY THIS DOES NOT MEAN THEY WILL ACT CONSTRUCTIVELY DURING THE DELIBERATIONS, DUE TO RESUME LATE THIS AFTERNOON.

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